


UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

November 13, 1996

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF: **SR-6J**

Ms. Judy J. Triller
Site Assessment Unit
Bureau of Land Pollution Control
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
2200 Churchill Road
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



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Dear Ms. Triller:

This letter is in regard to the Vulcan Louisville Smelting Company Site, aka the Vacant Lot ("the Site"), CERCLIS ID# ILD 984 775 437, located in North Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a brief update of the activities undertaken recently by the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("U.S. EPA") at the Site, and to request additional information necessary to complete the Site studies.

The Site comprises approximately 6.4 acres, located at the northeast corner of Commonwealth and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, North Chicago, Lake County, Illinois, and is surrounded by commercial, industrial, and residential properties. Laboratory analyses of the soil samples collected on-site revealed the presence of the following compounds: volatile and semi-volatile compounds, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls ("PCBs"), and organic compounds. Sediment samples collected from Pettibone Creek and the Lake Michigan harbor contained volatile and semivolatile organic compounds, pesticides, PCBs, and inorganic compounds. Laboratory analyses of the groundwater samples detected volatile organic compounds, pesticides, PCBs, and inorganic compounds. Although exposure could be occurring from direct contact with Pettibone Creek sediments, or ingestion of fish or frogs from the Creek, the major concern at the Site is direct exposure to on-site soils. Exposure is known to occur since the Site: (1) access is not restricted in any way; (2) is used as a thoroughway to residences and businesses in the area; and (3) is inhabited by homeless people from time to time. Exposure may be occurring through incidental ingestion, dermal contact, and inhalation of dust-entrained particles. The groundwater may also be significantly contaminated, and could be a potential pathway for contaminating Pettibone Creek. In the event that residential wells might still be in use in the area, exposure could also be occurring through ingestion, inhalation of volatilized products during household uses of the water, and by direct dermal contact during bathing or showering.

In order to thoroughly evaluate alternatives to address the contaminated sediments, soils and groundwater at the Site and on residential areas, the U.S. EPA has initiated a "focused" Engineering Evaluation/ Cost Analysis ("EE/CA") through one of its contractors, Ecology and Environment, Inc. The EE/CA is considered to be focused, since there are 16 reports available on the Site from a variety of sources, including a groundwater report. The EE/CA is planned for

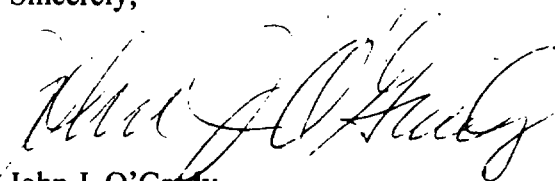
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completion in the March to May 1997 time frame. A Fact Sheet has been prepared to be sent out in December 1996. An availability session will be conducted either in January 1997 or April 1997, depending on the level of community interest, and the availability of any results from the EE/CA. Once the civil investigation is complete, appropriate enforcement actions will be considered to bring any identifiable responsible parties "to the table" to negotiate clean up of the Site.

Therefore, given the schedule for the EE/CA, and in order to adequately assess the Site, I am requesting and look forward to receiving, any reports or further information on the EMCO Manufacturing Company, Fansteel, Inc. (CERCLIS ID# 005 130 786), and North Chicago Refiners and Smelters (CERCLIS ID# 097 271 563) facilities. The information should include, but not be limited to, any available National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") permits under the Clean Water Act, any groundwater monitoring data, or any information on spills involving or emanating from any of these facilities. In addition, I would like to receive any available information on the closures under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA") being conducted at the Fansteel, Inc. and North Chicago Refiners and Smelters facilities. With respect to the Fansteel Closure under RCRA, I would specifically like to know whether or not the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency ("IEPA") has reached consensus between its Superfund and RCRA Programs on the best approach to address the Fansteel facility. That is, will all of the contamination on the Fansteel facility be addressed under the RCRA closure or would the IEPA prefer that the Fansteel facility be included as part of the "Vacant Lot" Site EE/CA and subsequent investigations?

I will need this information very soon. So, if at all possible, I would appreciate receiving the requested information by Monday, December 2, 1996. Thank you, in advance, for your assistance. If you have any questions, please contact me at your earliest convenience, at (312) 886-1477.

Sincerely,



John J. O'Grady
Remedial Project Manager
Superfund Division

cc: T. Crause, IEPA
B. Guria, U.S. EPA
T. Krueger, U.S. EPA
J. Kuhns, IEPA